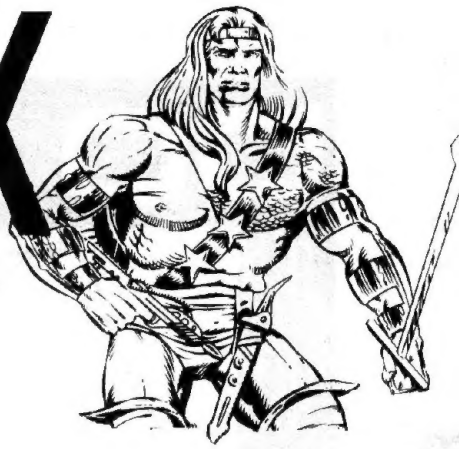
UFO
ALL STAR ISSUE
$1.50
1978
GRAPHEX
NO. 4
IRO

HERZOG/WUTSCHLER '86

GRAPHEX



ISSUE 4, 1978
CONTENTS:

4 THE CONDOR: Do It My Way, Or Die!

12 LIFE AND TIMES, A Warlock Chronicle

16 STERANKO: IN THE ROUGH

20 UNITED FANZINE ORGANIZATION CHECKLIST

24 A TALK WITH DOUG MOENCH & DON MCGREGOR, Conclusion

Art Credits:

COMPLETE ART
Willie Blyberg, 15
Clay Fourrier, 32
Doug Herring, 14, 25
Peter Iro, cover
Alan Limacher, 29
Bill Mutschler, 22 (from ENTROPY COSMIX 4)
Joe Sinnott, 13

FINISHED ART
Doug Herring, 32
Peter Iro, 5-11
Bill Mutschler, 4, 32

INKS
Gene Day, 13
Sam de la Rosa, 22 (from RADION 6), 26, 31
Doug Hazelwood, 27 30
Bill Mutschler, 2, 12, 15, 20, 21, 23-25, 27-29, 31, 33, 34 -well, it is my 'zine....

LAYOUTS, ROUGHS
Dan Adkins, 32
John Byrne, 26
Tim Herzog, 4-11
J. Steranko, 16-19

PENCILS
John Beatty, 13
Ernie Chan, 29
Dave Cockrum, 25
Ric Cruz, 30
Doug Herring, 12
Tim Herzog, 2, 21, 26, 27, 31
Pablo Marcos, 23 24
Lou Martinez, 29
Rick McCollum, 15
Dave Mowry, 13
Rudy Nebres, 28, 34
Bill Neville, 22 -from RADION 6,
Keith Royster, 27, 31
Rod Snyder, 20

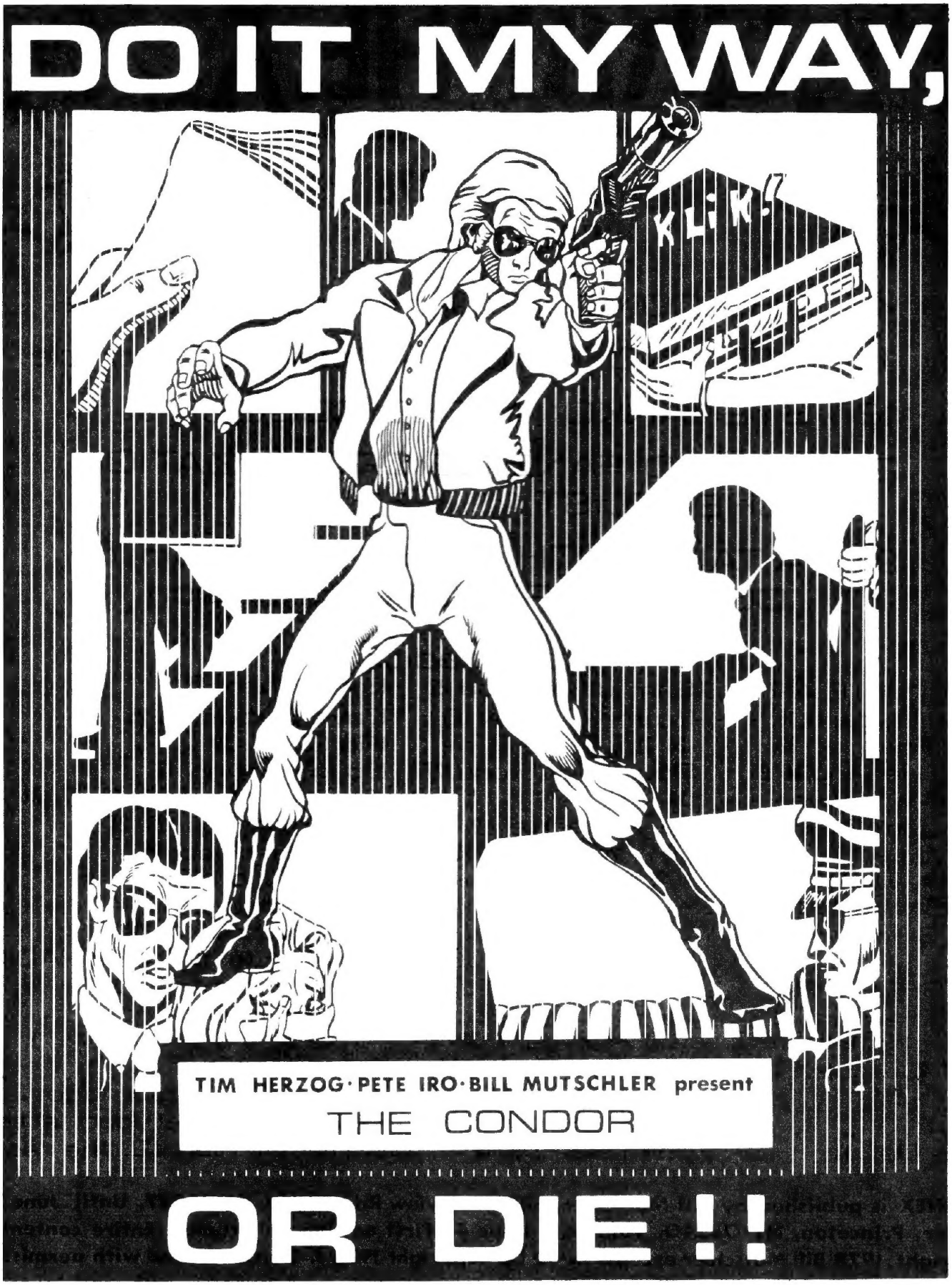
GRAPHICS
Tim Herzog, pg. 3 logo
Peter Iro, cover logo, lettering
Bill Mutschler, 12, the rest

GRAPHEX is published by Bill Mutschler, 500 Crestview Rd., Wayne, PA 19087. Until June '78: 327 Walker, Princeton, NJ 08540. Volume 1, issue 4. First edition, 400 copies.

Entire contents © copyright 1978 Bill Mutschler except: 16-19 [© copyright 1978 J. Steranko, used with permission]; Ms. Marvel drawing on page 22 as well as other characters and logoes are © copyright their respective publishers.

Printing: Replica, Princeton; Screening: A and D, Wayne. Thanks to all good people.

—Bill Mutschler


DO IT MY WAY,
KLIK!
TIM HERZOG · PETE IRO · BILL MUTSCHLER present
THE CONDOR
OR DIE!!

AS HEAD OF SECURITY FOR THE SECRECY-SHROUDED CONSOLIDATED TECHNOTRONICS, I WAS SUMMONED TO PRESIDENT JAMES GROGAN'S OFFICE CONCERNING A NEW ASSIGNMENT. HE FILLED ME IN ON THE DETAILS PERSONALLY, SINCE IT WAS HIS WIFE--
--DIANA, WHO HAD BEEN KIDNAPPED.
ΦΓΔ
HE GAVE ME PROFILES ON THE THREE MOST LIKELY SUSPECTS FOR THE CRIME.
KNOWING MY METHODS FOR DEALING WITH INTRIGUE, HE HAD--AS USUAL--ALREADY SET TECHNOTRONIC'S PSYCHOLOGICAL THINK TANK TO BOILING IT DOWN THIS FAR. IT WAS MY JOB TO ANALYZE THE FACTS AND TO GO FROM THERE TO CONFRONT THE UNKNOWN,, AS MOST OF MY CASES WERE, IT WAS AS MUCH OF A MENTAL CHALLENGE AS A PHYSICAL ONE.
TECHNOTRONIC'S EXISTENCE IS INVISIBLE TO THE PUBLIC. NO RANSOM NOTE HAD BEEN SENT YET, AND GROGAN HAD RECENTLY SEEN TO LESSEN CONTECH'S DEPENDENCE ON THE GOVERNMENT FOR THE BUSINESS BY EXPANDING INTO PUBLIC RELATED FIELDS. HE WAS MET WITH STRONG, VIOLENT OPPOSITION FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS. IT WAS LOGICAL TO ASSUME AN INTERNAL SCANDAL. I LOOKED AT THE PROFILES...

PRELIM ONE

CARLEY, THOMAS DANIEL

(SEE PERSONNEL--AS IBC)

MOTIVATION AND BACKGROUND:

THE SERVES AS *CONTECH'S* ASSISTANT BOARD CHAIRMAN AND IS DIRECTLY INFLUENCED BY GROGAN'S DECISIONS. A FORMER INTERPOL AGENT, HE MIGHT POSSIBLY HAVE FUGITIVE CONTACTS. HE IS MARRIED AND WORKS STEADILY FOR HIS GOALS.

COMPARKON-ASIBC-PTP21

PRELIM TWO

STEVENSON, JOHN MICHAEL

(SEE PERSONNEL--9652-C)

MOTIVATION AND BACKGROUND:

SERVES AS HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT AND WANTS TO MAINTAIN *CONTECH* AS A MILITARY/INTELLIGENCE BUSINESS. HE KNEW DIANA BEFORE HER SUDDEN MARRIAGE TO GROGAN. HE HAS FORMERLY WORKED AS A FREE AGENT AND FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY. THIS INDICATES GOOD CONNECTIONS. HE IS SINGLE AND WORKS INDEPENDENTLY FOR HIS PERSONAL DESIRES.

COMPARKON-9652-XPRO20

PRELIM THREE

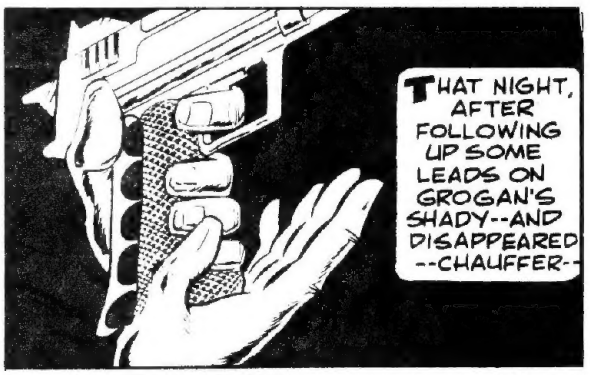
FAIRFIELD, STEPHEN PAUL

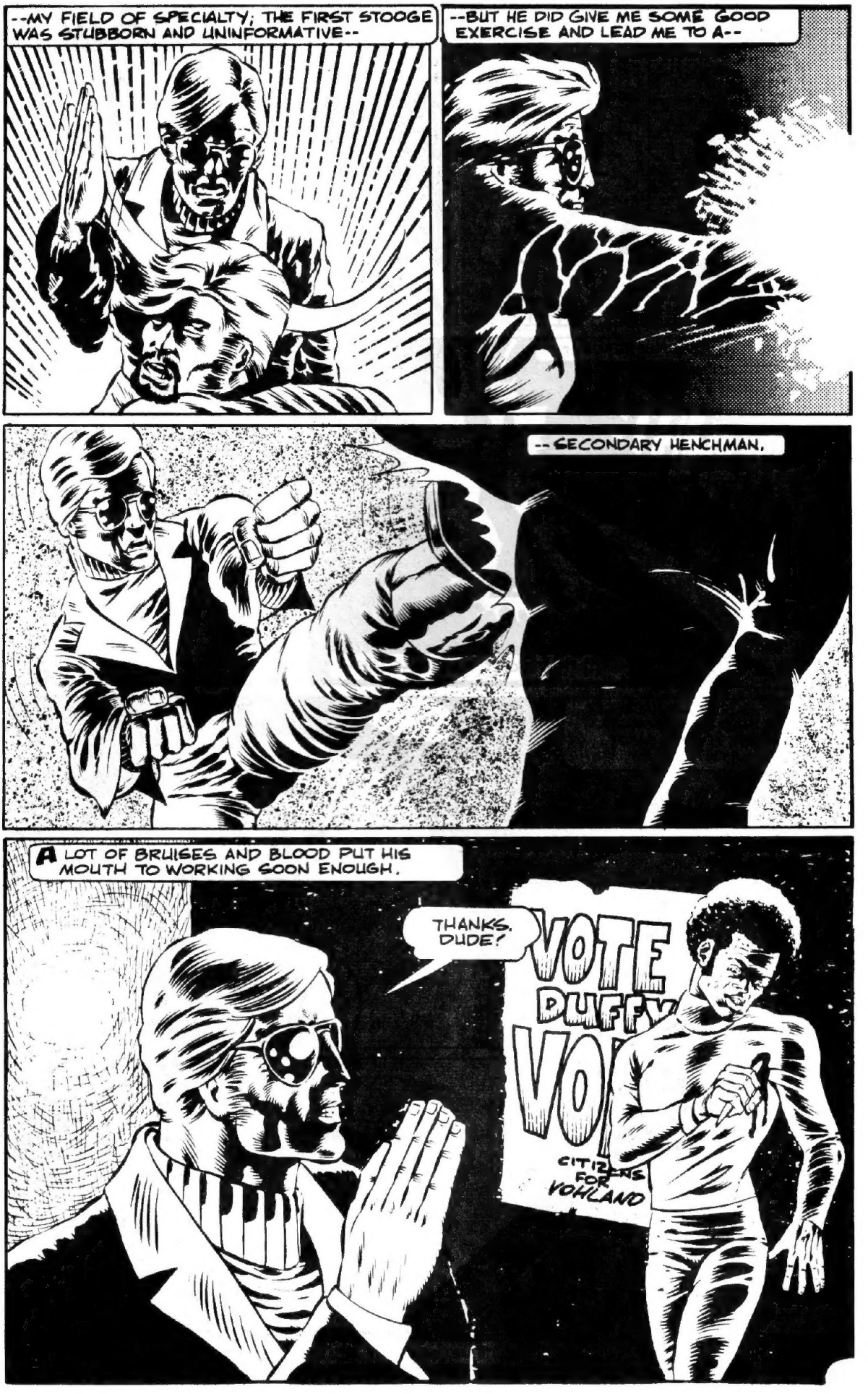
(SEE PERSONNEL--CD 504)

MOTIVATION AND BACKGROUND:

SERVED AS DEPUTY HEAD OF BOARD. RETIRED U.S. ARMY GENERAL, HAVING SERVED IN W.W. II AND THE KOREAN WAR WITH A TACTICS/STRATEGY ORIENTATION. EVEN THOUGH A GENERAL, HE HAS BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL IN HIS DRIVES FOR ADVANCEMENT IN AND OUT OF MILITARY LIFE. HE IS SEVEN YEARS DIVORCED AND HAD A SLIGHT BREAKDOWN IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SEPARATION. HE IS A VOCAL SUPPORTER OF MILITARY SUPREMACY AND IS OF THE OLD "ANTI-RED" SCHOOL.

COMPARKON-CD504-CFA3




--MY FIELD OF SPECIALTY; THE FIRST STOOGE WAS STUBBORN AND UNINFORMATIVE--
--BUT HE DID GIVE ME SOME GOOD EXERCISE AND LEAD ME TO A--
--SECONDARY HENCHMAN.
A LOT OF BRUISES AND BLOOD PUT HIS MOUTH TO WORKING SOON ENOUGH.
THANKS, DUDE!
VOTE
CITIZENS FOR VOHLAND

I WENT TO WHERE I WAS TOLD DIANA WAS BEING HELD.
CONTECH
INTRUDERS WILL BE SHOT!
UNFORTUNATELY, HE PICKED THE WRONG TIME TO CATCH A CIGARETTE.
BEING AT THE WRONG PLACE--
PHHHHT!
--AT THE RIGHT TIME WAS HIS--
--FINAL MISTAKE!
A QUICK SURVEY REVEALED THAT I HAD A FEW MORE MEN, UPSET BY MY SHOT, TO DEAL WITH.
THE SECOND SCUM WAS

NO TROUBLE
AT
ALL.
THE THIRD?
WELL, LET'S JUST SAY THAT THREE
JUST
PHHT!
WASN'T
PHHT!
HIS
PHHT!
LUCKY NUMBER.
DIANA?

IT WAS ABOUT TIME

TO CONFRONT

THE MAN BEHIND IT ALL?

WHAT?
FIJI

...SOMETHING CLICKED...

WHO?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? DID YOU GET ANY LEADS ON THE KILLER?
YES! IN FACT, I'VE GOT HIM UNDER WRAPS RIGHT NOW, YOU!
I NEVER THOUGHT THAT...
YOU'D FIGURE ME OUT!
AAARRGH!
TWH - IRO '96
CAN YOU SEE HOW THE CONDOR SOLVED THIS CRIME?
FINI.

GRAPHEX 4 **UNITED FANZINE ORGANIZATION**

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF WARLOCK

LIFE AND TIMES

-Larry Twiss-

Like the proverb concerning great trees sprouting from little acorns, one of the better series to float about the comic world in the last couple of years came from rather weak beginnings. Warlock's initial appearances (he was known only as Him back then) certainly lead for his validity as a character to be questioned. One of Stan Lee's weak points was his habit of representing social concerns in a rather simplified form. The outsider learning about our society was a common concern of his, and a formula which worked vastly better with the Silver Surfer. As he was then presented, Him came off as a rather ignorant Silver Surfer, stumbling in and out of the ways of society but lacking the nobility, poetic bearing, or intellectual thought which marks the Surfer. When the Surfer got in trouble with society because he did not understand the screwed-up way in which things work on Earth here, that we can be concerned. But when Him got in trouble with Thor because he tried to swipe Thor's girlfriend away, I'm more likely to chalk that up to stupid ignorance.

Efforts to punch up the character by planting Him on the newly created Counter-Earth and turn him into a biblical character were steps in the right direction. (For one thing, he finally got a name that we could handle--Adam Warlock--and we didn't have to worry about calling him Him anymore.) Such tales of biblical interpretation through modern art forms can be rather touchy; done properly they can be sensitive and meaningful, done the least bit poorly they become distasteful and blasphemous. Unfortunately, Warlock was to be in the latter category for most of his stint on Counter-Earth. When the writers weren't drawing rather poor parallels between Warlock and Jesus, they were playing around with the fact that Counter-Earth had no other Marvel characters as we know them, so they thought that it might be rather cute to do somelike turn Victor Von Doom into a crusading scientist or Reed Richards into a rampaging Brute. It's no wonder that the series was cancelled and the loosed ends were tied up in INCREDIBLE HULK. At that point, Warlock's cruxification and ressurection were rather well done, even if it did lack some in the creative category (after all, the initial story was written about two thousand years ago).

After Warlock's ressurection, it appeared that he was doomed to float around in limbo for a while. I have nothing against getting rid of a poorly done character (which is what Warlock was for the most part up until this point), but I do like to see loose ends tied up. If you have a bad character, kill him off with a final definite ending, don't let him float around in nowhere for the rest of eternity. It gets kind of sloppy. Luckily, Warlock was pulled out of Limbo by one Jim Starlin.

The two went together perfectly and created a magnum opus for both that was well needed. I have always felt that Starlin felt a bit restricted with Captain Marvel, where he had to abide by the rules of science fiction which had been constructed for the series before him. With all the cancellations and revampings that Mar-Vell has suffered, it seems as if each one only ties him down more. This was not any place where the dreams of fantasy within Starlin's head could run free. Nonethe less, his work on CAPTAIN MARVEL was an important time for the artist, or perhaps I should say the writer, in that Starlin got his feet wet in the practice of turning out galactic epics within the Marvel Universe. Where Mar-Vell's Thanos epic was a bit dragged out and poorly constructed, it's evident that Starlin learned from that experience and then showed us all how do do it with Warlock's Magus epic, which was much better in construction, development and pacing.

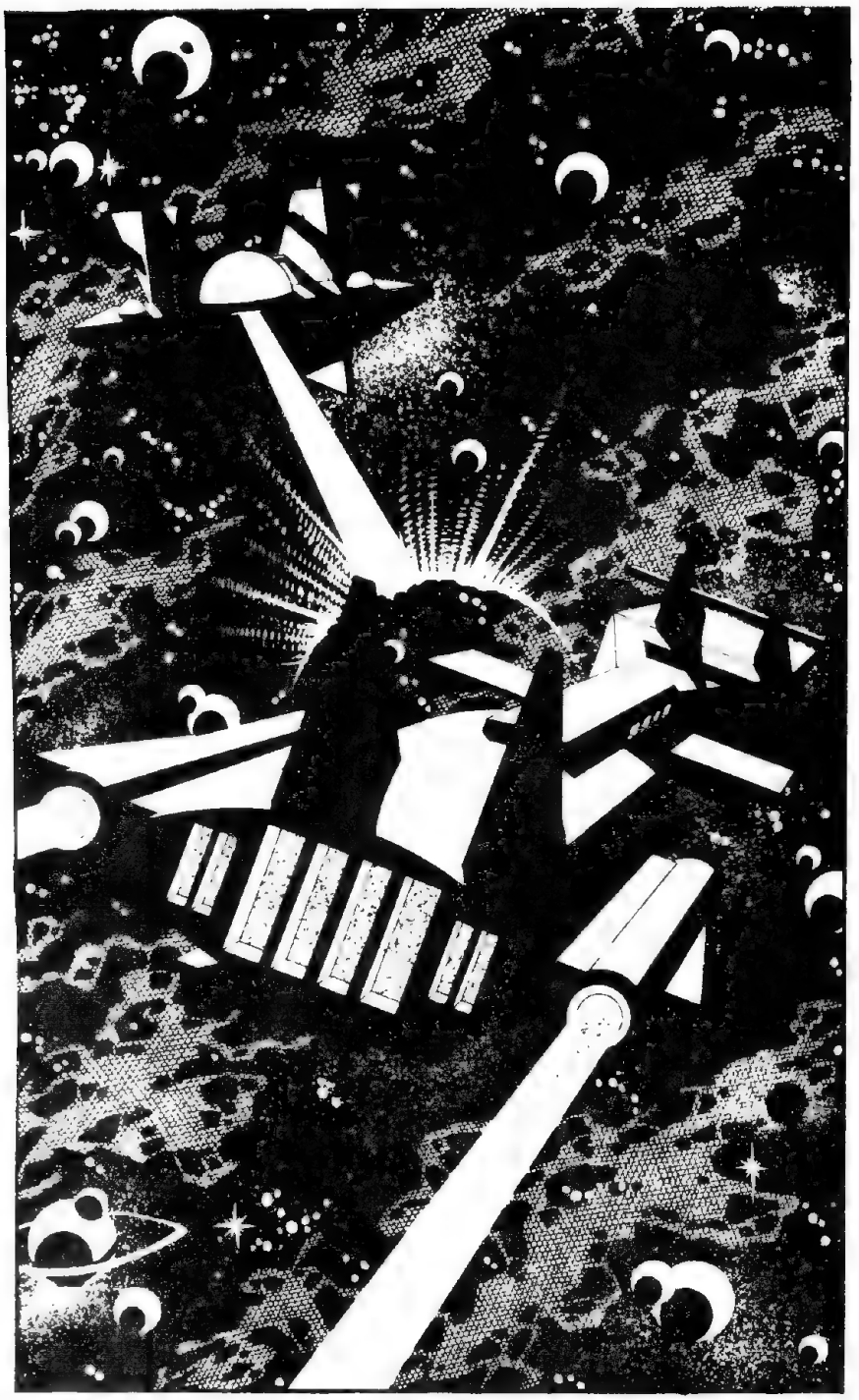
As I have just said, the Magus epic was a terrific story and fine comic entertainment, however,

like almost all major works, the story went beyond the realm of entertainment and added something in the philosophy department as well. This tale contained many theological implications as well. Ever since he was first tied into the pseudo-Christ characterization on Counter-Earth, Warlock has come to represent all organized religion, and more specifically, Jesus Christ. As all good stories do, the Magus epic utilized this characterization, thereby allowing it to grow and be developed. This is quite a chore for any writer, and quite an accomplishment when it is done well. But when the characterization is built upon such philosophical concerns as Warlock's was, the examining of his character must also include some examining of society as well. This was done extremely excellently here. By matching Warlock up against his future self, the Magus, Starlin presented us with a dualistic God figure. As Peter Sanderson pointed out in the letterspage of WARLOCK #9, this allowed us to look at the God who is a figure of good, but allows suffering; which is one of the oldest paradoxes ever, perhaps going back to the creation. Rather than examine this however, something else in the Magus epic caught my eye.

Remember that Warlock was/is to become the Magus. Warlock represents the idealistic earmarks of the religion with true principles and values. Magus is the church as a corrupt institution which goes through the "cleansing" of others in order to "indoctrinate them" and make them members of their group, which furthers their goals. Warlock becoming Magus traces the development of religious ideas into almost-evil practices as they must conform to society and become an institution. What this has to say about both religion and society is considerable. Perhaps it is pointing out that in order to survive and remain meaningful, or effective, religion must become a heavy-handed force to rule our lives. Perhaps society is thus that it can't adapt itself to religion and must convert religion to fit itself. Perhaps it is something within us all that causes this. Whether we are basically good or evil is an old philosophical concern, and it comes up once again. However, this story does not seem to cast totally negative images upon us, but rather society (whether we create society or it's the other way around is questionable) is what gets these negative points. As Warlock commands those on the Death Ship in STRANGE TALES #179, it is up to each of us to govern our own lives, not to allow religious institutions to overtake its initial goals of peace, justice, and brotherhood. (Familyhood if you prefer.) One of the founding practices of religion today is its concern with gaining more members, as is represented here.

STRANGE TALES #178 (where the Warlock saga was picked up and carried through #181, after which Warlock's own magazine was revived for issues #9-15) set up the initial forms of the Magus story to come. Although it has been done, it is sometimes not advisable to add a new philosophical twist to the topic with every issue of an epic-length story, but rather to simply set up the concerns and develop them throughout the entire epic, as it is done here. In #179, Warlock comes on strong with the "govern yourselves" principal (he's still a pseudo-Christ, as one can see by his sermons and allegorical parables) and in #180 we have a look at how religions can be self-justification and heroes in their own eyes, but other than that the series continued to develop by building onto the initial premises in a long flow of stories instead of concentrating on one area at a time.

As I stated earlier, the Magus epic was far better paced than the Thanos epic, and this is nowhere as evident as when Warlock got his own title back and WARLOCK #9 hit the stands. This is a finely constructed issue, building the proper suspense quite effectively. All the unanswered questions about how Warlock was to become the Magus were answered, and I frankly wondered what loophole Starlin had left himself in order to save the character. However, the tendencies of a creative person to dwell upon a character or concept which has proven successful or popular are strong, and Starlin

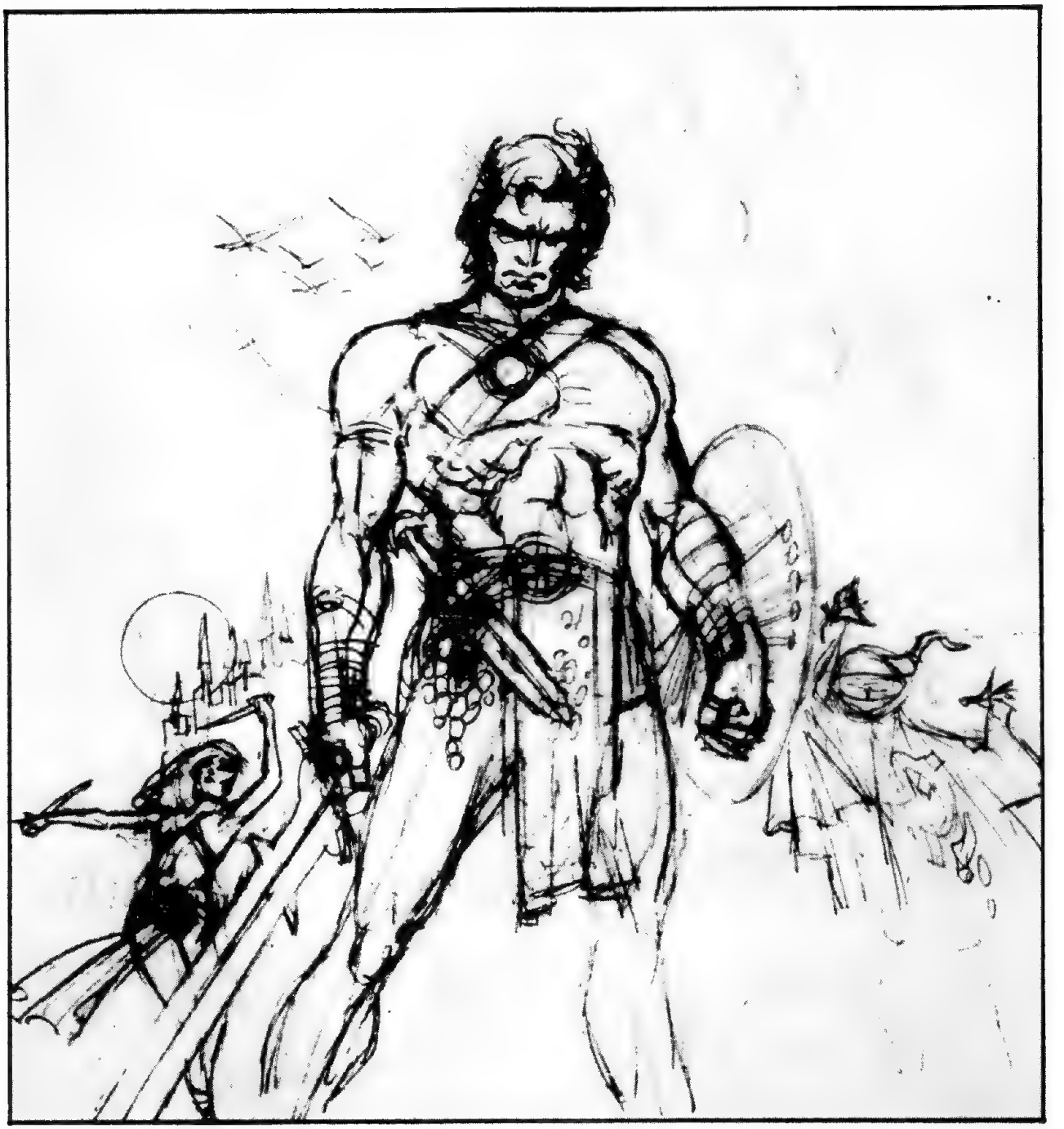


let in to them and the ever-popular Thanos of his earlier CAPTAIN MARVEL series made an appearance. His intervention into the tale did distract from it a bit. However, the tale continued on to be one of his best, as pages 15-16 of issue #10 show. Here, we are treated to an extremely fine exhibition of his character. The story went on to an excellent conclusion. Starlin was constantly amazing us with fine little nuances, and indeed the closing scene is one of those. Warlock and Pip seeing the Matriarch at the end of the tale gavie it a classic touch.

After this magnum opus, things died down a bit forthe last four issues. Both the Pip story in #12 and the following Star-Thief two-parter were fine pieces of science fiction and fantasy. The stories were strong in the characterization but didn't throw any new lights in that area. Issue 15 was, however, an excellent way to end the series. Conclude the series? Yep. Not being Jim Starlin or Stan Lee (or even Sanchez of the mail room) but rather a simple fan and letter writer, I'm afraid I can't give you any firm reason why. I can, however, piece together sundry facts. Sales, of course, were big factorially. I was under the impression that Warlock had the sales to survive, but not necessarily become a big seller. But at this time (and you may be wondering why so many series were cancelled at about that time), Marvel passed down a new policy which I consider wise: putting a limit on the number of titles that they publish. In order for something new to come, something old has to go. Even if that something has the nominal sales to survive. By this elimination by fire, only the finest attempts will stick around. Also at this time, Jim Starlin elected to leave Marvel for undisclosed reasons. At first Gerry Conway was announced as the new writer. But I can't imagine doing Warlock Starlin did. Not unlike Marvel's move to couple Steve Gerber's departure from MAN-THING with the falling sales of monster books at that time, perhaps all of the above added up in Archie's and Stan's collective minds and brought about the cancellation.

Nonetheless, #15 was a beautiful conclusion to the saga of Warlock. Very Hamlet-ish, the tale is very poetic as Warlock goes in and out of various lives. Most fittingly, the tale concludes with Warlock finally confronting the Soul Gem face-to-face. (Bet you thought that I had forgotten about that.) The Soul Gem represents something within us all. It's a hungry vicious vampire that puts self-preservation above all else. Warlock does not let in to it. And neither must we. As Warlock says in his closing lines, life is more important to the Gem than freedom. "That is why you're destined to stay a cold, emotionless stone," he addresses the Gem as he flies off into the cosmos, "That is why, good or bad, I shall always be Adam Warlock!"

STERANKO:



IN THE ROUGH

UFO!

THE UNITED FANZINE ORGANIZATION CHECKLIST

••ALL CURRENT ISSUES IN THE CHECKLIST ARE NOW AVAILABLE FROM UFO CHAIRMAN JAY ZILBER. CURRENT AND BACK ISSUES CAN BE BOUGHT FROM RESPECTIVE EDITORS. PLEASE MENTION GRAPHEX WHEN ORDERING. THANK YOU.••

GRAPHEX is a member of the United Fanzine Organization, a co-op of fanzine editors who mutually aid each other in the production and promotion of their fanzines. The members of the UFO trade zines with each other and recieve free advertising through the UFO Checklist, which appears in each member zine. The UFO requires its members to maintain a high level of quality; when ordering from a UFO Checklist you can be certain that these are among the finest fan publications available anywhere. The UFO encourages diversity in its ranks, and as a group its zines appeal to a wide variety of interests. Fan editors and publishers interested in joining the United Fanzine Organization co-op should contact its current chairman, Jay Zilber.

Batmania 23

Batmania, one of the oldest fanzines still being published since it was revived by Rich Morrissey, is the fanzine dedicated to fans who enjoy reading and collecting the adventures of Batman and Robin. This issue branches out into related topics as well, featuring an exclusion with Gardner Fox on his comics writing career, which spanned three decades and produced countless classic stories for many major comics publishers, most notably DC. Other features include; Jay Zilber's regular "UPDATE" column, this time reviewing the tabloid reprint edition of Batman vs. Ras al Ghul; reviews of the Batman and Wonder Woman encyclopedias by Tom Fagan and Alan Turniansky; Martin Lock takes a look at Batman in Brave and Bold; "The Legend of Two-Face!" by John D. Hennings; plus, a brief interview with TV's Joker, Cesar Romero. The usual features and letters round out the issue. Artwork abounds, featuring the work of Al Bradford, Arlen Schumer, Wes Smith, Mercy Van Vlack, among other fan talents. 28 offset pages, $1.00 from Rich Morrissey, 55 Claudette Circle, Framingham, MA, 01701.

CLYDE'S COMICS AND TALES 3

"Special Freudian Issue," including a psycho-analysis of my own "Violet Woman." 8 ditto pages of fannish self-indulgence, 5½ by 8½, 25¢ from Terrence Kelley, 1424 8th St., Rockford, Il. 61104.

endeavor 13

If you've ever wondered what future professional writers and artists do before they become pros, you'd do well to check out Kurt Erichsen's ENDEAVOR. Each issue features a collection of fan fiction by some of the most talented up-and-coming writers to be found anywhere, and this issue is no exception. Issue 13 features the fourth in a series of Kurt's "Adventures of Eringodes Plostheropa" tales of Atlantean fandom, this installment spotlighting the earliest test run of THE FAN MACHINE. Also this issue; "Find a Different Dream. . .Or Die," a familiar tale about a down-and-out would-be comic artist by Frank Watson, Rich Bruning, and Sharon Van Sluys, and more top-notch fiction by Dale Nelson, David McDonnell and Greg Swan. Regular features include "Reactions," ENDY'S unusually long and chatty letter column, and other short fillers. The entire issue is profusely illustrated by Kurt Erichsen, Cliff Kurowski, Dale Nelson, and others; covers are by George Erling and Tim Lynch. ENDEAVOR is one of the last of the great mimeo-zines, containing some of the best multi-color mimeography in or out of fandom. Offset covers. 76 pages, $1.35 from Kurt Erichsen, 1580 Myrtle Ave., Coos Bay, Oregon, 97428.

HERZOG · Mutschler 77

Issue 3 is a humor issue, featuring the misadventures of "The Master of Kung Gu," by Dave McDonnell, Ron Saito, and Alan Limacher; "Sycamore Seaserpent," by Clay Fourrier; "The Dinos," by Paul Absi and Bill Mutschler; plus Kon Funnies, Commercials You'll Never See on TV, and a scene edited out of the forthcoming Superman film. Issue four is in the typically incomprehensible cosmic fiction style that I originally set for the publication. It's eight color-heavy stock 8½ by 5½ pages featuring "Violet Woman," a philosophical musical fantasy in experimental sonnet/graphic format, a tale of a paradoxed man and the catalyst that brings him to mental reawakening. Also, 'Terrence's Inner Light Presents. . .' by Terrence McCoy and myself. Together they're $1.00 from the UFO chairman or myself.

FANDOM FUNNIES 3 (THE BUYER'S GOD)

FANDOM FUNNIES is a parody-zine, with each issue lampooning other well-known comics fanzines. This tabloid-size issue parodies a typical issue of THE BUYER"S GUIDE, with its regular features: "Lead Balloons" by Don and Maggie Married (Bill Sherman, Jay Zilber, and Roger Caldwell), "So What?" by Murray Blastoff (Harry Broertjes), "Crucifier Comments" by Martin Grime (Mike Valerio and Tom Hegemen) and the rest of TBG's regular columnists. The advertisements have to be seen to be believed, including the classic "Jack Kirby School of Modern Comics Writing," and a revealing interview with Alan Right. Also included is a new Ear-Fall-Off Floyd Portfolio and an assortment of other FANDOM FUNNIES features. Artwork includes covers by Alan Hutchinson, Bill Sherman, and Kurt Erichsen, as well as more graphics by Ron Harris, Rich Bruning, Jim McPherson, Al Williamson (swiped by Martin Grime), Ken Barr (swiped by Martin Grime), and Frank Robbins (swiped by Martin Grime). THE BUYER'S GOD is easily the funniest zine of 1977. 28 pages, 11 x 17 offset on newsprint for $1.00 from Jay Zilber, Oberlin College #740, Oberlin, OH 44074.

Sheldon Mayer began his career in the late 1930s as the artist/writer of "Scribbly, Boy Cartoonist." Eventually, he moved on to funny animals and then wrote and drew 98 issues of SUGAR AND SPIKE. Sheldon Mayer is a creative genius, right along side Carl Barks and John Stanley. . .and now, there's a fanzine devoted to the artistry of Sheldon Mayer. GLX SPTZL GLAAH! premiers with a never-before-published essay by author Ron Goulart on "Scribbly"; Mark Evanier discussing Mayer's personal approach to humor; Gary Brown 'interviewing' the now-retired Patsy Mouse from Mayer's famed THREE MOUSEKETEERS strip; and Rich Morrissey taking an indepth look at one of S.M.'s more recent creations, The Black Orchid. Also included are examples of rare, unpublished Mayer artwork and information on the REVIVE SUGAR AND SPIKE movement. If you're a Mayer fan, this is what you've been waiting for. This first issue is 28 offset pages, 8½ by 11, 60¢ from Ken Gale, 220 East 85th St., #5-R, New York, NY 10028.

Just in, this issue features 'Mall!' by Bill Sherman, plus 'His New Post,' more articles, as well as advertisements for TranSex Corp., 'The Fund for a Bigger Baptist Church,' Colonel Speed's new brand of Chicken Delight, and several other insanities. 24 8½ by 11 offset pages, 75¢ from Bill Sherman, 608 E. Douglas #2, Bloomington, IL 61701.

RADION 6

The emphasis in RADION is on interviews, this time peering into the minds of Tom Batiuk (of 'Funky Winkerbean') and book cover artist Michael Whelan, who discusses his background, his work and getting screwed over by Marvel. Ron Goulart discusses his books, his many pseudonyms, WEIRD HEROES, s-f, and future projects. (Along with the Goulart interview is a checklist of his work, a scorecard of his pseudonyms, and the first three episodes of STAR HAWKS.) In other features, Douglas Herring discusses "The Doom of 'The Eternals'" and Tom Mason blatantly self-indulges in an editorial. Cover by William Neville/Sam De La Rosa and Doug Herring, as well as other interior illoes by Tom Batuik, William Black, Willie Blyberg, Alan Weiss, and others. All offset, 36 8½ by 11 pages from the chairman or Tom Mason, 705 Draper Rd., Blacksburg, VA 23060, for $1.00.

TETRAGRAMMATON FRAGMENTS

TF is the official newsletter of the United Fanzine Organization. This newsletter/apa was founded in 1972 and continues today in its fourth volume under chairman Jay Zilber. TF is published monthly and on time, featuring the official business of the UFO, reviews of current UFO zines, and an up-to-date checklist, lots of fannish natter, personal gab, occaisional feuds and other fun goings-on between the members. 15 to 30 ditto pages, 50¢ or 4/$1.50 from Jay Zilber, Oberlin College #740, Oberlin OH 44074.

Still Available:

Batmania #22--$1.00 from Rich Morrissey

Clyde's Comics and Tails #2--50¢ from Terrence McCoy.

Endeavor #7 ($1.50), 8(50¢), 9($1), 10($1.40), 11($1), 12(75¢) from Kurt Erichsen

Entropy Cosmix #3--75¢ from Bill Mutschler

Graphex #2(75¢), #3(80¢), or $1 for both from Bill Mutschler

Ludicrous Situations, Ltd--#'s 1-4 (75¢ each) from Bill Sherman.

Omniverse #1, $1.75 from Mark Gruenwald

Radion--#4(65¢), #5(75¢) from Tom Mason

The Comics Journal--#'s 27-38($1.00) from Gary Groth and Kim Thompson.

Addresses:

Gary Groth and Kim Thompson, PO Box 292, Riverdale, MD, 20840.

Mark Gruenwald, 211 W. 88th St. #3-A, NYC 10024

Jim Main, 85-A Prospect Hill Rd., New Milford, CT, 06776

□ OZARK FANDOM 9/10 □

This special issue presents cartoons and strips instead of OZ's usual letters and articles format; MOOSIE, Bob Votjko's answer to Lassie; 'Nature Girl,' by Ron Foss, and 'From Beyond,' a comic strip adaptation of H. P. Lovecraft's story, with artwork by Mike Vosburg. On the text side is 'The Comic Book Industry Seen As A Helix of Semi-Precious Star' by David Kirby, which takes on the topic of inter-company imitation. In all, 20 8½ by 11 all-offset pages for $1 from the UFO Chairman or Chris Rock, Rt. 2, Box 265, Mountain Grove, MO 65711.

omniverse

A TALK WITH DOUG MOENCH & DON MCGREGOR

(part two)

This interview was conducted over a year and a half ago at Doug's rural home in Pennsylvania. This second half concentrates on their underlying personalities, and in particular, Don's values and motivations. Although talk was influenced by his firing just days before, I think that this can function as a unique insight. At last point in issue three, we were at the point of each's entry into the field.

Bill: I can remember seeing a few letters by you, Don.

Don: They were probably in SHIELD. I had letters in virtually all of them. I loved the way Steranko did them. Steve Gerber's said to me, "I don't see why you still rave over Steranko." But to me, he's one of the most creative people in comics, especially at the time.

Doug: No doubt about that.

Don: He blasted things wide open. I understand that the one problem was that the books weren't financially successful, but that doesn't diminish them in my eyes. Steranko did them, and they'll always be there. My admiration of Jim is very large.

I think there's too much of a competitive nature about the industry. If you're safely within the middle ground, then you're just fitting in and nobody can be jealous about what you're doing, feel you're an idiot for it, or not understand why the hell you're even doing it. This has caused incredible blocks in me at times when sitting at the typewriter and thinking, "Why? Why am I doing this? Why don't I just knock it out? That's what they want. What the hell do I think I'm trying to accomplish?" It certainly would have been easier on me.

They'd say that I shouldn't listen to the fans, and I'd feel very intimidated before I even began. At times I've written certain lines for a strip and I knew immediately the kind of reaction that there'd be. You could say, "Well, I'm not going to do it," and then the book won't be as good--at least in your vision--as you think it could be. Therefore you feel completely dissatisfied with it. Or, you take the risk, and if you take the risk often enough. . . .

I really wish that I didn't have to say this, but I think there's a Nurse Ratched mentality in this field. If there's things you've done wrong, people don't come up to you and say, "I don't think that this worked and here's why." Instead, you're cast down, ridiculed, or chastised for it. And if you get a phenomenal response in the mails, other people will react to that in a very negative sense, because they'll want to know why they aren't getting it. How the hell do I know? I'm familiar with my books and the ones I particularly like; Doug's and Paul's Shang-Chi, Gerber's Howard the Duck--I loved his Man-thing even more, Starlin's Warlock, Deathlok.

Incidentally, I was due to take the latter over. Recently they said that they'd let me do Deathlok, and Rich asked me if I'd work with him on it. Seeing as how the Black Panther was being taken away, I said OK. We had come up with what I think would have been interesting ideas for it. But again, it'll never see fruition, such as the last Killraven strip. It was to be called "Slow Fade of an Endangered Species." It would have been a commentary of the killing off of the mavericks in society, and even my views on what's happening to the industry as a whole.

Bill: I realize you can get absorbed into comics and fantasy as a way of life, but I was wondering what else interests you, musicwise of whatever.

Doug: Well, I'm a good old rock and roll freak here. Rolling Stones is my favorite music. The other big things in my life, outside of my private life, are movies and reading. I also like swimming and stuff like that, but when you're talking about intellectual pursuits. . . .

Don: (Laughs) There are a few other things that I've heard you're interested in. I thought that they were pretty interesting myself, but we won't go into that. Like Doug, I'm a big movie freak. I love everything going back to serials and westerns all the way up to. . . .

Doug: Well, I don't go that far; B westerns I don't go for. Quality westerns I really like, but I'm not like Don--Hopalong Cassidy and all that.

Bill: In your opinion, what was the last good western?

Don: There was one in the past year, "Bite the Bullet" by Richard Brooks. What a nice movie that was! Did you see it Doug?

Doug: No, but you talk about it a lot.

Don: Ohh, I loved "Shane". That was one of my all-time favorite films.

Doug: That was a good western, there are quite a few. I don't like westerns as a rule, but there are good ones that make you like them despite the subject matter.

Don: "The Oxbow Incident", "The Magnificent Seven", "The Professionals", "Jeremiah Johnson".

Doug: That's not really a western. You see, I'm an Indian freak from way back; when I was a kid and we played cowboys and Indians, I was the only one who wanted to be an Indian.

Don: What you never saw, directed by Sidney Coler, was "Scalphunters".

Doug: Right.

Don: With Ossie Davis, Burt Lancaster, and Telly Savalas.

Bill: How old's that?

Don: It was about 1967, I think. In the late sixties.

Doug: I might have seen that, because in 1967 I was in a sort of perpetual fog and I don't remember much of that year.

Don: (Laughs) Well, it was a good film, but don't see it on TV because they cut it up.

I'm still a tremendous "I Spy" freak, I still love Culp and Cosby. I think that they were one of the great screen teams. There was such a great chemistry between the two of them. I think that in their own way--I was telling Doug this the other night--that you'll never see that kind of production value on TV again; filming on location and even some of the things they did with scripts.

Doug: That's not true, though, because as wretched as it was,"Space: 1999" has, I think, a bigger budget than "I Spy" ever did.

Don: It probably does. But, I'm talking about a show that goes out and films on location, and has in all areas average or above average. . .

Doug: Well, as long as they can do such hits as "All in the Family" using one set, they're not going to spend a lot of money except in special cases like a science fiction thing.

Don: One of the things that gets me with all TV series now is that they have a sameness about them within the series; they never stray from their format. In the "I Spy"'s, like the one we saw the other night, "The Room With the Rack," they did this thing about the CIA giving false information and using other people.

Doug: Which I thought was my original plot at one time, and "I Spy" had already done it!

Don: Culp wrote several of the original scripts. He did phenomenal themes, things like that in three or four of them. But then they could also go into a lighthearted comedy. Take "Baretta", you'd never see them do a light piece. At times you'd never even know "I Spy" was an espionage show; you'd say,"What the hell is this?" It was just character stuff, and very nicely done.

Bill: What other TV series did you enjoy or think was well done?

Don: "Route 66". Sterling Siliphant bled his heart out in those days. Siliphant was just one of the most incredible writers, I think. He influenced me a lot, I know. I still love it.

The stuff he does today is just no comparison. I suppose he's opted for the money, and I don't blame him, because he's getting paid well for it. I don't know how he made out when he was doing "Route 66."

Doug: And yet he's not producing many successes. He's getting paid. . . .

Don: Not true.

Doug: "Posiedon Adventure", as much as I dislike the film. OK, that. But what since then?

Don: "The Towering Inferno". How good did that do?

Doug: Did he write the screenplay for that?

Don: Yes he did.

Doug: One of my good friends--Frank Robinson--wrote the original book.

Don: He's had successes with some of his movie scripts, but I don't think that they were as passionate. When he did "Route 66" they were very personal scripts. I just loved them because they were so involving. When he did "Naked City"--there hasn't been one police show, despite the ad nauseum infinitum of cop shows that we've had in the past two or three years, one that comes up to "Naked City". That's because "Naked City" was about people, about humanity. It wasn't just about cops going out and cracking down on pushers or nogoodniks hiding out in sleazy bars. (Phone rings, for Doug.)

Bill: Maybe it's DC trying to hire you.

Don: Actually, I may do some stuff there. I don't know. As a matter of fact, I turned sown a series from National because I thought it would come into conflict with Marvel. There's a thing that even as a freelancer they don't leave you go from company to company.

Bill: How do they wield their power?

Don: They say, "If you do that, then we're not going to keep you on our favorite list." As soon as some books come up or have to be dropped. . . well, it's all meant to keep you in line. It's kind of like using the electric prodding stick to make sure that you behave yourself. At times there's kind of an insensitivity to people's feelings by other people within these places, even people that you've known for some time. Somebody came up when Craig and I were talking about the demise of Killraven--we had just found out about it--and already there was somebody saying, "Craig, hey, why don't you do this and such?" That's insensitivity, that abruptly and brusquely and not even realizing that there are people's lives here that have been affected.

Bill: Doug (who's in between phone calls now), is there anything outside of comics that you'd like to spout on about?

Doug: Yes. My writing started outside of comics; men's magazines, fiction, articles, book, movie, and record reviews, newspaper Sunday supplement articles, and novels. Comics were the last thing. Most people start in comics and go on to bigger things, it seems, but I worked my way down to comics (laughs). It just sort of happened backwards.

Right now I'm seriously considering branching out, but not dropping comics altogether. I'm fed up with the hassles attendant with working in them. No, it has nothing to do with comics themselves, I will always love them. If I were to write a bestseller that was critically acclaimed, becoming a millionaire and the idol of the literay critics, I'd probably still write comics. You might think that I'd say goodbye to comics, but I don't. I honestly love them, but I don't love them to the exclusion of everything else. At one time I did, but not now.

Bill: Would you like to see a new direction for comics? A change within the same format or a change of format?

Doug: I'd like to see room opened up for new things, not necessarily changing everything. In other words, I think even the most typical comics shouldn't change to become some sort of supersophisticated thing that older fans will like and the little kids won't comprehend. But, I would like to see more markets opened.

Don: I can really agree with Doug on that. I think one of the problems is that there's not enough experimentation done. It's sort of risky and they don't want to chance it.

One of the things that I was hoping to do with Black Panther and Killraven was that if somebody's nine or ten years old and reads it for the action and the graphics, fine. But, if they could go back to it when they're thirteen or fourteen and say,"Hey, there's something here I've never realized before. This is relating on this level." And maybe they could go back to it when they're even older, read it a third time, and say, "Wow, I still didn't realize what's here." Then, I don't think that they'd become bored with comics, and therefore you wouldn't have a different audience coming in every three or four years. When people got older they wouldn't just say, "I can't stand this nonsense and I don't want to read it anymore." You could perpetuate them a little bit better, and widen the field so that more people have interest in comics.

Bill: Do you think there's more room for experimentation in comics' decline?

Don: They'd be more cautious than ever.

Doug: In a crunch, there's no risks taken, no gambles. You stay with the tried and true, and the proven successes. You don't fool around unless you're in such desperate trouble that it's a last ditch attempt.

Don: I think there's entirely too much negativism going on in comics too, which makes people hesitant to try and go beyond what they've been doing. I know that's happened with me, and similar things have happened with Doug. We really get hung up because you're really afraid of the reactions you'll get once it makes it to the offices.

Doug: Yes, the negativity creates blocks within you. I freezes you almost completely and scares you. You don't want to do the tried and true,

because then they'll say that you're repeating yourself. You don't want to try something to new, or else they'll say, "This isn't Marvel Comics. Marvel Comics is this and this is what we want. You see, we want you to do this, but don't do it." You know what I mean? You're caught between what they want being what they don't want.

Don: If you don't hold true to whatever artistic vision you have and just do what they want, then you're chastised from the outside. If you don't do it, then in a way you're ridiculed by them.

Bill: Didn't you get offered anything to replace the taken books, or were you just cut off?

Don: It was about like that. I don't know whether I should have seen it coming or not, because they had taken the other two books. But, there had been so many changes in editorial stands there. I know that when Roy was coming he said not to worry, because he had things in mind for me to do. Then there were so many changes, and each wrought further disasters, especially since so much of the material was being taken up.

One of the things that bothered me about the Cage book was that it was a series that I really wanted to do. I had lost it once, and then they said I could do it again. Then somebody else decided they wanted to do it. It was somebody I knew and thought I knew pretty well, someone who knew that I had wanted to do it. I kind of really felt hurt about it, that they'd just take it, and also knowing that I didn't do too many books.

Then I got conflicting stories from different elements. Somebody would say, "I want to use this stuff, and those people don't." And then you'd hear from the source, "Well, no. It's not me, it's them." God knows where it all goes. Obviously, when the stories are conflicting to such a major degree, somebody's not telling the truth. It's kind of like a Watergate thing in miniature, if you will, but not quite as devastating in nature. Still, it's indicative of a kind of mentality. There's just a lack of sensitivity. I don't know whether this makes sense to you or not, but. . . .

I still have a lot of love for Marvel Comics, like I said, many of the books that are coming out; some of Doug's and Steve Gerber's as well as a few that Steve Englehart does. A few of these people, I think, are people who try to do something with the genre beyond what they were, and yet were also successful as genre pieces. I know there were times when I blew it. It wasn't lack of caring, it was either that I had exceeded what I could really make work in a seventeen page comic in the time limitations that we have at hand. . . . I think more often it's important to try. I'm certain to say that jungle and science fiction strips have never been big sellers, as you know, in comics. That we made them last as long as they did was amazing to me.

It may have been a bad decision to do the bit about the Klan in commercial terms, but I still think that it was valid to do such a series. I wish that they had been better books, both in my half and on Billy's. But, we were going to have some coming out with Rich Buckler and we were starting to crystallize, 'getting into it because it was such an immense project, at that. It was going to take some time to really establish all the roots of it and what we wanted to get at. It's not just about the Klan, that's a part of it, a portion of what I think is happening in America today. There's a kind of polarization, people joining groups and thinking that their way is the only way, and seeking something to believe in. People these days are desperately seeking that thing in which to be-

lieve and end up joining groups that come closest to what they believe in, or. . . .

Bill: Something they can easily identify with or keep as an excuse against thinking for themselves?

Don: Or maybe they've been passionately or emotionally moved by the oratory of certain people within the group. I'm concerned about it. I wish we had a chance to do more with that. If we had gone into a third Panther novel, we'd have done something with the Black Panther and the apartheid in South Africa. I would have done something about his mother, too, because there's never any mention of his mother.

Bill: 'Sounds good. I know another writer who was exiled from South Africa for political reasons.

Don: I would have been interested in talking to him if we had ever gotten around to doing it. Most of the stuff is pretty well researched, especially the Africa material. In Wakanda, all the details were as researched as was possible for a seventeen page book. What happens is that much of it you can't use, you just can't fit it into the format that you have in comics, especially in the limitation of pages, in which using plot, structure, characterization and theme, you've got to keep mixing all of these. I hope we did it fairly successfully.

Bill: You were going to introduce a Moon-type figure. . . .

Don: That reminds me of something. I don't know if you remember the God-Killer in Panther's Rage. Basically, it was about the fact that people come to a point in their lives where they have to examine what they've been brought up with and their religious beliefs. Either they reenforce them and become stronger with them, or they kind of live with them in some amorphorous middle ground.

I got a letter from somebody on that issue, and I'll tell you about it just to show you how readers can interpret things entirely different from what the creative people have in mind. We got a letter saying that the writer would blow up the offices at Marvel Comics because I was obviously advocating all blacks going out to kill all whites because the Black Panther killed a white gorilla. I don't know how in the hell that guy got that out of the story. I only used white gorillas because it was a schtick they had come up with long before. I felt that it was part of the Panther mythology, and I thought that I'd flesh it out and show what would happen if it was really there. Yet you get a reaction of that sort, a total miscomprehension of what you've done. .

Bill: The Moon thing would have been important idea-wise to show people and make them see. It's only coming to light how people are getting sucked into these things.

Don: Exactly. Wind Eagle is all about that. He's Puerto Rican, and a very strict Catholic. Due to the events and circumstances that have happened in his life, he's become very disillusioned at a young age and begins seeking something else. This is what picks him up. See, it's really not important whether it's the Klan, the Reverend Moon, or whatever. What they do is use the things that you feel are oppressing you to get you to join them. It would be the same if it were the Black Panthers or a Woman's Lib group. I would prefer to see people start doing things as individuals. If you must join an organization, if it's really the only way you can get anything started to make things better for yourself, then only stay as long as you need it and then get out and still be true to yourself.

Normally what happens when you set up an organization is that you have to have a committee. Then the committee starts making money off the thing. They have to support themselves and they want to make a bit more money as time goes by. You end up where 85-90% of all your effort, passion and belief goes into perpetuating the organization than the thing you want to cure.

I'd like to see, even though at often times--and I guess that I can speak from personal experience now--even at personal expense for people to stand up as indiviuals. I have a feeling that they are trying to lock the mavericks down. They don't want to see that type because it's disturbing to them, especially to the people that don't have the guts to do it or don't have the inclination and just don't care. But, they are disturbed that it disrupts whatever

peaceful little status quo that they have managed to set up, so they're going to try to weed them out, force them out one way or the other. How about that?

Bill: This may seem self-contradicting, but as a mass I don't think that people are capable of standing up for themselves. If everybody did manage to, however, there'd be chaos. There has to be a median between the extremes.

Don: Sure, I agree with that. I'm not talking anarchy here. I'm not saying that I'm entirely against political systems. I don't like the way they've gotten a bit too vast and a bit too all-powerful in the things that they can do. I think that's indicative by the kind of things we've seen in the past decade or more.

Here's some pages from the last Killraven for you to see.

Bill: So, Craig draws with blue pencil just like Paul Gulacy.

Don: Not all the time. That's because he was doing layouts in this issue. Our next issue was going to take them down to Disneyworld, but it won't occur now. In fact, to show you how the guy is, he was going to travel down to Disneyworld so he could actually visit the places we were going to use in the story.

Doug: (Coming back from the phone.) Did I miss the end of the interview?

Bill: Not really. Have you had much trouble with Marvel asking you to change things?

Doug: Yesterday, as a matter of fact, I had a little trouble.

Don: (Laughs.)

Doug: We won't go into that. Other than that, no, only one other time in what must be hundreds and hundreds of stories that I've done. Twice, just twice, and yesterday was the worst of the two.

Bill: You have a lot of stories under your belt and seem to not just hack them off. Have you built yourself up to speed, or what?

Doug: What a question, I'm getting sick of it. . I guess everybody asks me it.

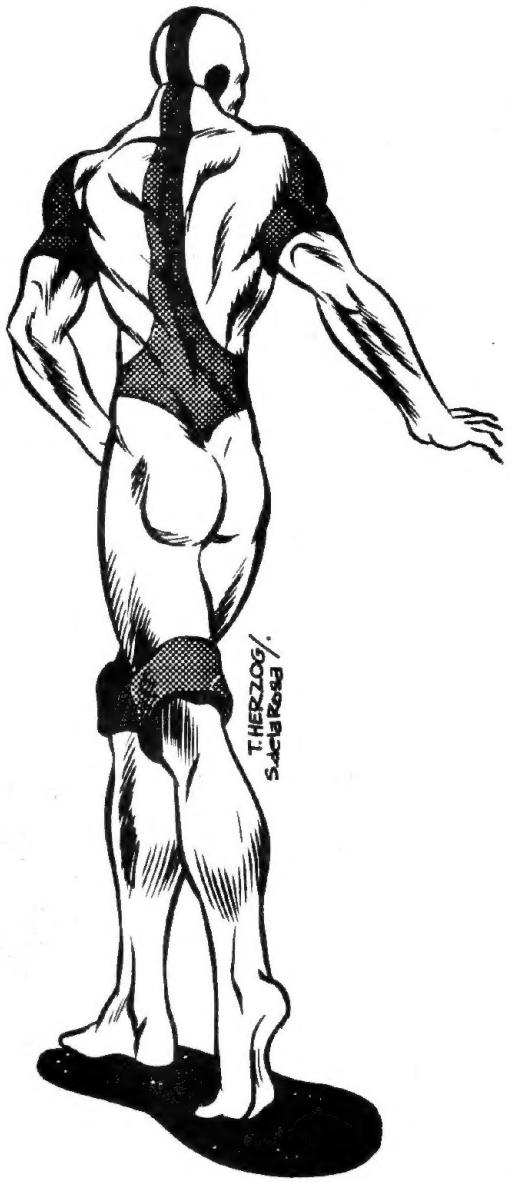
Bill: We could always forget it.

Doug: No, it's OK. I'm not faster than any other writer as far as I can tell, with the exception of Don, who's incredibly slow. He is the exception rather than the rule. As far as anyone else in the business goes, I don't think I'm any faster. I'm either crazier, more disciplined, or whatever. I sit behind the typewriter more hours per day than other people. That's all, it's as easy as that. I just do more, but I don't do it any faster.

Bill: Do you want to do more?

Doug: It's an obsession, I don't know.

Bill: Do you like it that much? Do you need the money for this house?



And while I don't necessarily agree with that stacked-cards point of view--in fact, like Travis Bickle, I'd often like to take personal justice into my own hands. I'm fairly sure that's what 'Taxi Driver' intended to espouse. But again, I'm rooting for Charlie Bronson.

Doug: Well, I did. Lately it's worn off. I'm not doing as much as I used to. I want to do more, as a matter of fact, but not as much as I once did. Now that I am in this house and it's easy to step outside and see how beautiful the real world is. . . .When I was trapped in a little matchbox in New York City there wasn't much else to do. Working was the only thing that was really worthwhile to me besides going out to the movies, and even that I didn't enjoy too much because of the New York streets.

Bill: Have you seen 'Taxi Driver'? What did you think of it?

Doug: Yep. I liked it very, very much. I've had a lot of arguments about it because most of the other people who've seen it--some of them liked it but were disturbed by it or. . . .Obviously, everybody makes their own interpretation. Mine was derived from what I thought was apparent. It seemed very clear and simple to me. I didn't have to analyze it to get what I thought was the point of the story.

Bill: I was somewhat confused by it, although impressed by certain aspects. What exactly did you get out of it?

Doug: Sort of a reverse image of 'Deathwish'; viligante as a psychopath rather than a hero, showing that taking the law into your own hands is. . . .how crazy it can be. And yet, the crazy guy is worshipped as a hero in the end. Therefore, people who worship viligantism are condoning something that's as bad as what it sets out to eradicate.

JOHN R. BEATTY '77
MUTSCHLER

NEBRES